NLG NEWSLETTER

Quarterly Publication of the Numismatic Literary Guild Inc.

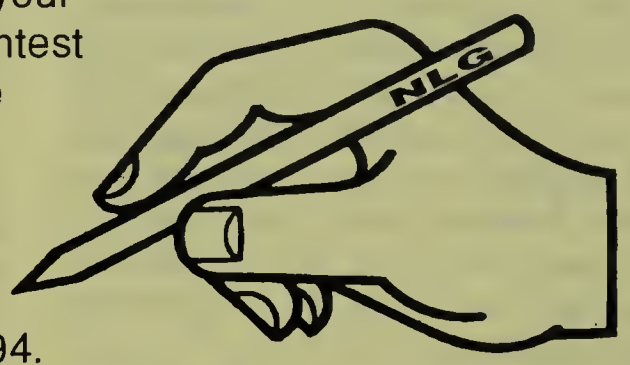
Volume 26, No. 1 *April 1994*

CALLING ALL ENTRIES!

NLG COMPETITION DEADLINE MAY 31, 1994

It's that time again! You have until the end of May to get in your entries for the 1994 NLG Writers' Competition. If this year's contest is as full of top-quality entries as last year's was, our judges are going to need all the time we can give them.

A complete list of 1994 categories begins on page 5, together with the competition rules. Please get your entries to us as quickly as possible. We hate doing it, but we really will have to disqualify any entries postmarked after May 31, 1994.



R.W. JULIAN PROPOSES NEW SYSTEM OF U.S. COMMEMORATIVES

R.W. "Bob" Julian is one of the nation's most knowledgeable and most respected numismatic researchers and historians. He also is a former member of the NLG Board of Directors and the 1992 recipient of the coveted Clemy Award. Some months ago, with typical thoroughness and attention to detail, he prepared a proposal for revising the U.S. commemorative coinage system -- which he and other thoughtful observers feel is disastrously off-course. He is hoping that hobby leaders, especially the American Numismatic Association, will get behind this proposal. We welcome your comments on his plan. EDITOR

- The law will establish a commission, to be composed of twenty to thirty persons from the numismatic, banking, historical and governmental communities. It will have the authority, subject to a Congressional committee and/or Administration veto within a fixed period, to issue commemorative banknotes and coins ranging from the quarter dollar to the five-dollar bill. (In promoting this idea, the ANA should state that everyone could now afford commemorative coins of their own country, not just the wealthy. The media will willingly use this rationale.)
- The committee will have an executive director and small staff (preferably fewer than five persons) to coordinate the activities of the commission and distribution of the commemoratives. The executive director and the commission members will be subject to Senate approval. The headquarters of the commission should be close to Philadelphia and that Mint, but far enough away to keep costs down to a minimum. High-priced office space is not necessary.
- There will be contests on a national scale, restricted to citizens of the United States, to design the artwork necessary for the commemoratives. The commission, with the permission of Congress, should set the amount of the prizes with more than one prize being awarded for a given contest. The national publicity given to such contests will result in increased sales of commemoratives.
- The winning drawings go to the engraving department of the Philadelphia Mint or to the Bureau of Printing and Engraving to prepare models or master engravings on steel, as the case may be. (It may be necessary to hire two or three additional engravers.)
- The mints should not strike any surcharged commemorative coins with the possible exception of proof pieces. The minting of gold and silver bullion coins would not be affected.

Cont. on page 3.



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Ed Reiter

In the spring, a young author's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of the NLG Writers' Competition. As a matter of fact, so do the fancies of a few OLDER authors.

Here at NLG Central, our thoughts have been turning in that direction too. That's why the current Newsletter contains the complete rules for the 1994 competition.

As some of you may recall, we stubbed our toes a year ago in getting out the rules for the 1993 contest. Unforeseen delays in distributing the Newsletter forced us to extend the entry deadline — and since the Newsletter contained both the original deadline and the amended one, confusion abounded.

This year we've allowed ourselves extra time — a margin of error, if you will — in distributing the rules, and we're hoping to eliminate (or at least greatly reduce) the snafus that plagued us a year ago.

Understandably, our contest draws considerable interest, as well as occasional sniping from undoubtedly well-meaning critics. This is perhaps as good a time as any to address some of the comments we've heard — and there have been plenty!

A perennial objection is that we have too many categories and too many awards. As you might expect, we seldom hear this objection from those who are on the receiving end of our handsome award plaques.

This particular criticism seems to reach a crescendo following each year's Bash, when it goes hand in hand with grumbling that the Bash was overlong — because (you guessed it!) it took so much time to announce and present the awards.

It's true that we had an unusually long list of award winners last year at our Baltimore Bash, including a record number of "extraordinary merit," "appreciation award" and "distinguished service" honorees. But that was a special occasion: We were celebrating our 25th anniversary, and we felt it was appropriate to extend recognition in a tangible, visible way to those whose contributions — while noteworthy — didn't happen to earn a standard award.

The suggestion has also been made that we cheapen our awards by giving them, on occasion, to works that are unworthy, at least in the opinion of the critics. First, it should be noted that judgments as to worthiness tend to be subjective; I suspect that no one, myself included, has ever been 100 percent satisfied with the outcome of our annual competitions, but we do our level best to be fair. Second, the award that seems to have stirred the most grumbling, given several years ago to a book on silver dollars, was not a best-entry honor based upon the merits of the volume, but rather a non-competitive plaque recognizing the fact that whatever its shortcomings may have been, the book represented an exceptional investment of time and effort.

In recent years, we have required submission of five copies of each entry — including five copies of any book or catalog tendered for consideration. I, for one, agreed with the rationale for this: It enabled us to broaden the base of the judging and that, in turn, made it less likely that the outcome would be skewed, in any given category, by the fact that one or two judges might harbor a bias in favor of (or against) a particular author or subject.

Hardly anyone objected to submitting extra copies of articles, columns, magazines, newspapers or newsletters. We did receive objections, though, from a few entrants — and would-have-been entrants — in the book categories. They made the legitimate point that books can be relatively expensive and that furnishing five copies represented a significant financial burden, especially for authors of modest means who had self-published specialized hobby books.

NLG NEWSLETTER

Since 1968, the official publication of the Numismatic Literary Guild, Inc.

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In recent months, I discussed this issue at length with members of our Board of Directors — particularly Scott Travers, our contest coordinator — and we decided that this year, we would reduce the number of copies required to three, not only in the book categories but right across the board. We still believe that having more judges maximized the likelihood of equitable results, but we're sensitive to the fact that the previous requirement may have caused inequity monetarily.

One change we didn't make this year was in the number and nature of the categories. Essentially, they're the same as a year ago. Yes, there are quite a few — but then, there are many different kinds of numismatic publications, and frankly it would be difficult to trim the categories significantly without depriving important elements of our membership of potential recognition.

We do intend to tighten our standards this year: If the judges determine that there are no fully meritorious entries in a given category, no award will be given. In the past, there have been instances where certain categories drew only one or two entries and winning was a matter more of default than of merit.

Scott Travers is coordinating the contest again this year and that's the surest guarantee of all that things will go smoothly. The Numismatic Guaranty Corporation of America (NGC) has generously agreed to facilitate the process by serving as the reception point for the entries. All should be sent to Scott in care of NGC, as noted in the rules. (This comes as welcome news indeed to my wife, Patt, since our dining room served as the reception point LAST year!)

I urge all members to study the ground rules carefully and then to submit entries in any categories where they have produced eligible work. For all the occasional carping, NLG awards are meaningful and prestigious, and over the years they've been a source of great satisfaction and pride to those who won them.

*****

Spring is also election time for the Guild. Two members of our Board of Directors -- Q. David Bowers and Margo Russell -- are currently completing two-year terms, and under our bylaws both are eligible to serve a second term. (The rules permit two consecutive terms, for a total of four years' service.)

As eligible incumbents, Dave and Margo both will appear on the ballot this year. To qualify for placement on the ballot, any other interested member must receive a minimum of three nominations. These should be sent to me at 12 Abbington Ter., Glen Rock, N.J. 07452, and must be postmarked by May 31 and received by June 10. Ballots will be sent to the membership thereafter if there is a contest.

*****

By now, some of you (I hope ALL of you) may have discovered that the NLG is the focus of a full-length article in the May 1994 issue of COINage, a publication with which I have had a close relationship for quite a few years. The story is entitled "They Write About Coins" and was written by our own David T. Alexander.

Dave, of course, preceded me as executive director of the Guild, so he certainly knows the subject matter thoroughly. In a sense, the COINage article is a much condensed version of the "25-Year History" Dave wrote last year for our silver anniversary. If you haven't yet seen the magazine, I urge you to get a copy and read this interesting article. Who knows: You may be mentioned in the story!

Speaking of our silver anniversary, it's still not too late to obtain an example of the 1-ounce, .999-fine silver medal we issued last summer to commemorate that milestone. Only 250 pieces were struck and supplies are dwindling -- but while they last, you can acquire one of these beautiful medals (our first precious-metal collectible) PLUS a copy of the 50-page history booklet for a combined price of $25. That price is postpaid within the United States and Canada; postage is additional elsewhere. Orders should be sent to me. The address, again, is: 12 Abbington Ter., Glen Rock, N.J. 07452.

In closing, let me say how gratified I am by the many favorable comments we've received regarding the new format of the Newsletter. It's being laid out and printed now by Michael and Diana Sedgwick, who are well-known to many of us as gracious, effective publicists for the British Royal Mint. They have worked skillfully with myself and our editor, David Ganz, to make this already invaluable tool even better. The current issue is the second "put to bed" by Michael and Diana, and I, for one, look forward to many more!

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A PROPOSED SYSTEM

cont. from pg. 1

- No commemorative should honor an event less than 50 years old; in this way current social disputes would not nullify the program. Events or persons honored prior to the 50-year limit should go in quarter-century intervals but half century intervals would be better.
- The Federal Reserve System will destroy any commemorative coin or banknote found in circulation two years after date of issue; the amount so destroyed will count against the seigniorage for that year. This should create mass hoarding and thus high profits to the Treasury. Virtually no one will spend coins that have been saved for collections or future generations. The effect of this rule would be psychological rather than real.

- All seigniorage derived from a commemorative program should be applied to the national debt. This facet of the idea will create a strong selling point. (The expenses of the commission can be funded from the seigniorage, with a spending cap established by Congress.)
- The Treasury should change the designs on the circulating coinage no more often than 15 years but in no less than 25 years. The cent should perhaps be excluded from this provision as hoarding might damage its value to the economy. (The regular change of such designs will provide additional revenue.) In addition, faces of individuals, whether living or dead, should no longer be permitted on the circulating coinage.
- While this program is a tax, it is a voluntary one. The ANA can proclaim to the country that it is the only broadly based organization actually asking for the privilege of paying taxes to help retire the national debt. The cost of administering this tax (seigniorage) will be the lowest of any tax program in the United States. The ANA could use these two points very effectively in a national campaign to persuade Congress to adopt the plan.

Explanation and Rationale

Only the American Numismatic Association has the resources to organize a national campaign for the acceptance of this proposal. The steps necessary would be as follows:

- The ANA sends a letter to all members of Congress explaining the program and what it would accomplish. At the same time, through its district representatives and their contacts, individual members of Congress would be personally contacted, either in Washington or in the home district.
- Once the answers, or lack thereof, had been received for the second stage, ANA officials would contact members of the national media (including talk shows, C-SPAN; etc.) to point out that collectors are the only organized body offering to help pay the national debt with a voluntary tax. This type of action, if properly organized, would bring great attention to collecting and the ANA. (It is not possible to estimate the precise amount of seigniorage to be obtained each year, but the figure of "several hundred millions," within two years of the program going into effect, can be used with little fear of contradiction.)
- The ANA, in league with friendly members of Congress, should prepare the necessary draft legislation as soon as possible. The current leadership has the necessary expertise.
- At the same time that the national media is contacted, there would be a series of articles in



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Summarize your feature ideas, keep in mind our features are 1,000-1,500 words. Let us know if you have photos or art available and Send your proposal off to:

Beth Deisher, Editor: 911 Vandemark Rd., Sidney, OH 45365. FAX: 513-498-0812.

(published weekly - ave. 80 pgs.)

the numismatic press detailing the program and naming those Congressmen who refuse to cooperate. The undersigned would be willing to undertake this end of the matter, thus saving the ANA from Congressional backlash when unpleasant remarks need to be made and recalcitrant Congressmen attacked by name. All collectors would be encouraged not only to write the officials involved (or contact them directly), but also to write letters to the editors of local newspapers denouncing those who give lip service to reducing the national debt yet sell out to special interests. The letters to the editors would be as ugly or polite as considered proper by the writer. Collectors should also contact possible opposition candidates with an eye towards bringing pressure from this direction. Everything should be done on a nonpartisan basis.

- It should also be pointed out to all concerned, that the seigniorage on the coinage is but the first step and that there will a ripple effect as collectors buy and sell these coins in future years. The changing of regular coinage designs will also produce large quantities of seigniorage over the years.
- The ANA should state publicly that the Mint has little to do with all of this and the present system of surcharged coins for special interests is mandated by Congress alone. The publication of letters in the numismatic press attacking the Mint has served to divert attention away from the real problem. Collector anger has to be directed towards Congress – not only the source of the problem but the solution as well.
- The reason for removing portraits of individuals from the circulating coinage is quite simple. Once on, they are almost impossible to get off, leading to frozen designs and political cowardice by the Treasury and Congress. The rule should stop the use of the circulating coinage designs for political purposes, as has been done too often in the past.
- To those members who would argue that the ANA has no business in such matters, the reply should be given that the organization should be a leader and not a follower. The idea presented here is neither partisan nor political and, if enacted into law, will not only be a distinct service to the country but to numismatics as well. The extraordinary times demand a special effort to abolish the corrupt system of surcharged "coins" that are in reality nothing more than high-priced medals forced on the numismatic world by an arrogant and unresponsive Congress.



1994 NLG WRITERS' COMPETITION RULES



Welcome to this year's NLG competition!

Please read these rules carefully if you wish to participate in the contest.

1. All NLG members are eligible to participate if their dues have been paid.
2. All entries must have been published between May 1, 1993, and April 30, 1994.
3. Entries must be postmarked not later than May 31, 1994 and received by June 10, 1994.
4. All entries must be the work of entrant or must have been produced under entrant's editorial direction.
5. The judges reserve the right to change the category in which an entry may compete, if they believe such change is necessary to assure equity of all participants.
6. Three (3) of each entry must be submitted in all categories except portfolio. In the later category, one copy will suffice. Quality photocopies of newspaper and magazine articles are acceptable.
7. No entries will be returned under any circumstance.
8. No entrant may submit more than one (1) entry in any single category. (The same entry may also be included in the Portfolio competition, however.)
9. In categories with only one entry, judges may decide that no award will be given, or may substitute Special NLG Recognition for the regular NLG Award.
10. All judges' decisions are binding and final; confidentiality of all judging is absolute.
11. Failure to conform to all rules will be cause for disqualification from the competition.
12. All entries must be sent to:

    Scott Travers
    c/o NGC
    7 Century Drive
    Parsippany, NJ 07054

13. Each entry copy must have the following information attached or it will be disqualified:
    - CLASS
    - CATEGORY
    - ENTRANT'S NAME & ADDRESS
    - PUBLICATION
    - PUBLICATION DATE
    - TITLE OR HEADING
    - AUTHOR (IF OTHER THAN ENTRANT)

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The following classes and categories are in force in 1994. PLEASE EXAMINE YOUR ENTRIES CAREFULLY to be certain they qualify in the proper category!

CLASS I
BOOKS

Books may be submitted by author, publisher or editor. Three copies must be submitted. Eligible are new books or those accepted by the judges at their sole discretion as substantially revised versions of earlier works.

1. **BOOK OF THE YEAR**
The work having the greatest potential impact on numismatics: Criteria include overall reader appeal, research quality, photographic, printing and graphic excellence, cover and typography where applicable. Books submitted in the specialized categories below may be considered for Book of the Year as well.
2. **BEST SPECIALIZED BOOK IN**

a United States Coins
b World Coins
c U.S. Paper Money
d World Paper Money
e Tokens & Medals
f Numismatic Investments
g Museum & Exhibition Catalogs

CLASS II-A
U.S. COMMERCIAL
NUMISMATIC MAGAZINES
(Coins, COlNage magazines)

3. **BEST ARTICLE OR SERIES OF ARTICLES** (3) copies of articles dealing with:

a Coins
b Tokens & Medals
c Paper Money

4. **BEST COLUMN** (3) copies EACH of (3) selections from ongoing column must be submitted.
5. **BEST ISSUE** (3) copies of the issue submitted by publisher, editors. Criteria include overall numismatic appeal, features, departments, graphics, journalistic and editorial excellence as applicable.

CLASS II-B
WORLD COMMERCIAL
NUMISMATIC MAGAZINES
(World Coin News, The Celator, similar overseas publications)

6. **BEST ARTICLE OR SERIES OF ARTICLES** (3) copies of articles dealing with:

a Coins
b Tokens & Medals
c Paper Money

7. **BEST COLUMN** (3) copies EACH of (3) selections from ongoing column must be submitted.
8. **BEST ISSUE** (3) copies of the issue submitted by publisher, editors. Same criteria as category 5 above.

CLASS III
NON-PROFIT OR CLUB
NUMISMATIC MAGAZINES
(The Numismatist, TAMS Journal, The Shekel, etc. NOTE: National publications will be judged separately from regional, state, and local publications.)

9. **BEST ARTICLE** (3) copies of articles dealing with:

a Coins
b Tokens & Medals
c Paper Money
(ONE Award)

10. **BEST COLUMN** (3) copies EACH of (3) selections from ongoing column must be submitted.
11. **BEST ISSUE** (3) copies of the issue submitted by publisher and/or editor. Same criteria as category 5 above.

CLASS IV
NUMISMATIC NEWSPAPERS

12. **Best spot news story or continuing coverage of a developing story in numismatics.**
13. **BEST ARTICLE OR SERIES OF ARTICLES** (3) copies of articles dealing with:

a Coins
b Tokens & Medals
c Paper Money

14. **BEST COLUMN** (3) copies EACH of (3) selections from ongoing column must be submitted.
15. **BEST ISSUE** (3) copies of the issue submitted by publisher, editors. Same criteria as category 5 above.

CLASS V
NON-NUMISMATIC
NEWSPAPERS

16. **THE MAURICE M. GOULD MEMORIAL AWARD**
Entries may be submitted by publisher, editor or columnist of any coin column appearing regularly in any non-numismatic newspaper of any size circulation.

CLASS VI
AUCTION CATALOGS

17. Submit (3) copies of each catalog entered. Criteria include cover design, overall eye appeal, format, graphics and layout, in-depth research and quality of description. Entries may be submitted by auction firm, auctioneer or cataloger.

CLASS VII
COMMERCIAL PUBLICATIONS

18. **LEE MARTIN FOUNDER'S AWARD** for Best Investment Newsletter: Criteria include overall reader appeal, quality of research and writing, and graphics as applicable. Submit (3) copies EACH of (3) issues, total: 9 items.
19. **BEST DEALER-PUBLISHED** magazine or newspaper. Criteria include overall reader appeal, quality of research and writing, and graphics excellence. Submit (3) copies EACH of at least (3) different issues.

CLASS VIII
BEST ALL-AROUND
PORTFOLIO

20. Collection of writings and/or photographs and related items demonstrating numismatic writing ability and versatility. **Organization and presentation will count as heavily as volume.** Only one copy of

portfolio need be submitted; other copies of items included in portfolio may also be submitted in other relevant categories at entrant's option.

CLASS IX
BEST WRITER IN
NLG NEWSLETTER

21. NLG Newsletter editor alone selects winner. Criteria include writing skill and style, numismatic or organization support, content to inform the member-readers. No entries accepted, editor alone decides.

CLASS X
AUDIO-VISUAL

22. RADIO: Best news story, feature report or continuing series involving numismatics. Entries must include standard size audio cassette of story, feature report of (3) selections from continuing series, accompanied by written statement citing date(s) of broadcast, call letters and location of radio station as well as information required in NLG rules listed above.

23. AUDIO: Best audio program involving numismatics, but non-broadcast. **Includes audio tracks from numismatic slide shows, educational tapes, audio newsletters and other presentations.** Entries must include standard size audio cassette, written statement citing date(s) of first use, plus information required in NLG rules above.

24. TELEVISION: Best spot news story, feature report or continuing series involving numismatics. Entries must include standard size cassette recording of television broadcast or (3) selections from continuing series. Tape must be either half-inch VHS or 3/4-inch professional videocassette, and must be accompanied by written statement citing date(s) of broadcast, call letters and location of station, plus information required in NLG rules above.

25. VIDEO: Best non-broadcast slide film, movie film or video tape presentation involving numismatics. Entry must include audio as well as visual materials, either written script or sound track of film, audio or video cassette used in presentation. Entry must be accompanied by written statement citing date(s) of first use, plus information required by NLG rules above.

26. CLEMENT F. BAILEY MEMORIAL AWARD. First presented in the 1987 competition, this award was endowed by Jim Miller of Miller Magazines in memory of an especially beloved member of the numismatic writing community and NLG founder, Clement F. Bailey. This award recognizes excellence among new writers in numismatics, whose first published writings appeared during the previous year. **Nominees are supplied solely by numismatic publishers.**

THE CLEMY AWARD

In a category of its own since 1968 is the Clemy Award. The highest honor of NLG is bestowed annually during the NLG Bash on an NLG member in recognition of writing skill, dedication to numismatics, sense of humor and dedication to the Numismatic Literary Guild. Nominations are submitted by members of the board to the previous year's winner, who makes the final choice.

ROLL OF HONOR CLEMY AWARD WINNERS 1968-1993

1968	Clement F. Bailey
1969	Edward C. Rochette
1970	Lee Martin
1971	Margo Russell
1972	Virginia Culver
1973	Maurice M. Gould
1974	Eva B. Adams
1975	Ray Byrne
1976	Chester L. Krause
1977	Richard S. Yeoman
1978	Lee F. Hewitt
1979	Abe Kosoff
1980	Glenn Smedley
1981	Arlie Slabaugh
1982	Eric P. Newman
1983	Kenneth Bressett
1984	Donn Pearlman
1985	Walter Breen
1986	Ed Reiter
1987	David Alexander
1988	James L. Miller
1989	Q. David Bowers
1990	David L. Ganz
1991	Clifford Mishler
1992	R.W. Julian
1993	**Russell Rulau**

WHAT'S THE STORY?

The NLG wants you!

Yes, the Guild needs a few good men... and a few good women... to help fill the pages of our Newsletter with interesting articles and news items.

Since many of us are writers by profession, or at least by avocation, you'd think we would have no trouble coming up with material to fill these pages. But our editorial cupboard is getting bare -- so won't you help us restock it?

Please send your stories, comments and other correspondence to Executive Director Ed Reiter at 12 Abbington Ter., Glen Rock, N.J. 07452. We don't have a budget to pay for such submissions, but our audience is exclusive and the psychic income is great!

NLG MEDAL BOOKLET STILL AVAILABLE



The special silver medal issued last year for the NLG's 25th anniversary is still available in limited quantities. The 1-ounce, .999-fine medal is being offered along with a copy of the Guild's 50-page silver anniversary booklet for a combined price of $25. That price is postpaid for orders being shipped to addresses in the United States and Canada; postage is additional elsewhere.

The anniversary booklet, written by David T. Alexander, chronicles the formation of the Guild and highlights of its first quarter-century, including major award winners and special activities — notably our annual Bashes.

We also have a very few copies of a videotape of our 1993 Bash in Baltimore, produced by David Lisot. This would normally cost $49.95 by itself — but while supplies last, we are offering the videotape PLUS the medal PLUS the booklet for a total price of $49.95. The booklet alone can be obtained for $5 postpaid. The medal and videotape are not being offered individually.

Orders should be sent to Ed Reiter, Executive Director, 12 Abbington Ter., Glen Rock, N.J. 07452.

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5 New Members Join Our Ranks

Spring is here and flowers are starting to bloom.

NLG is growing, too: Five new members have joined the Guild since the last Newsletter appeared, and we're pleased to introduce them at this time:

- Douglas G. Borden of Melbourne, Fla., a frequent contributor to Coin World and World Coin News and longtime historian of the Rochester (N.Y.) Numismatic Association. Sponsored by Dave Harper.
- William A. Burd of Oak Lawn, Ill., general manager of Gold Dust Coin Inc. and author of an extensive article on 1894-S Barber dimes scheduled for publication later this year in The Numismatist. Sponsored by Tom DeLorey.
- Kevin J. Flynn of Rancocas, N.J., author of "Getting Your Two Cents' Worth," a complete guide to doubled dies, repunched dates, overdates and clashing in the two-cent series. Sponsored by Ed Reiter.
- Wayne K. Homren of Pittsburgh, a writer whose work has appeared in numerous hobby publications, including Coin World, The Numismatist, the TAMS Journal, The Asylum and the Civil War Token Society Journal. Sponsored by Dave Bowers.
- Eric von Klinger of Iola, Wis., associate editor of numismatics for Krause Publications; since joining Krause's last July, he has been a contributor to all the company's numismatic periodicals. Sponsored by Bob Van Ryzin.

We thank the members of NLG whose articles have enriched COINage magazine since 1964.

Miller Magazines, Inc.

We Invite Your Submissions



ACHIEVING PARODY

By Ed Reiter

"Nobody asked me, but ..."

A popular sports columnist of a bygone era -- I think it was Jimmy Cannon -- used that line to introduce his views on burning issues of the day.

I don't claim to be in Jimmy Cannon's league, but the article at hand does have something in common with Cannon's columns: Absolutely nobody asked me to write it!

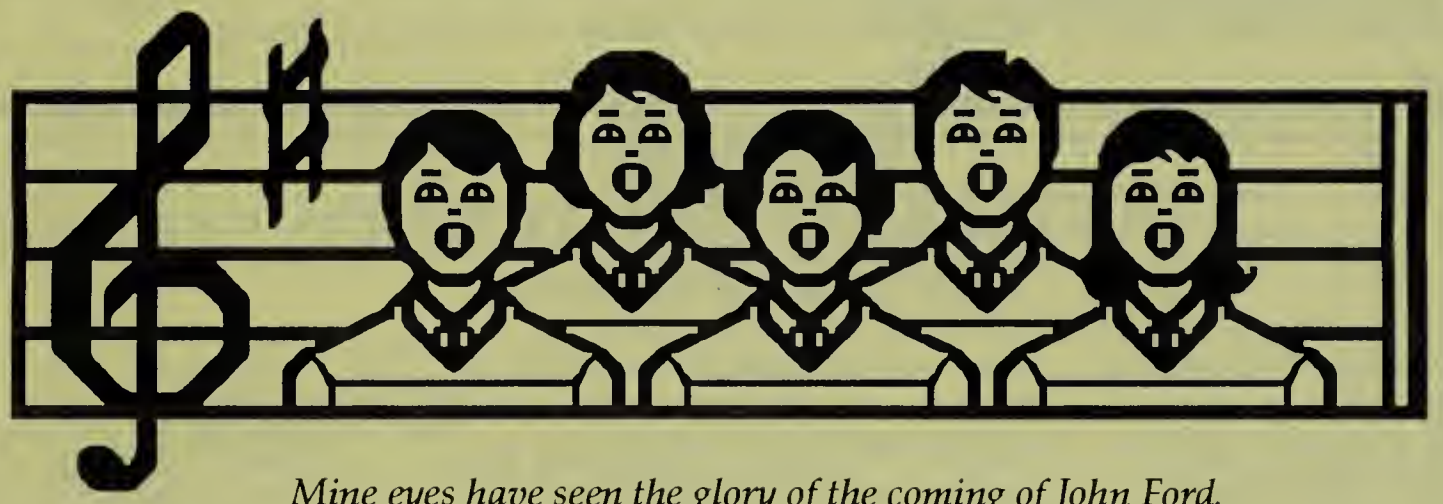
Notwithstanding the deafening silence, it hit me recently, during a rare moment of meditation, that I have been "entertaining" NLG Bash-goers for 10 full years now with parodies of well-known songs refitted with coin-related lyrics: I made my debut at the last Detroit convention, in 1984, and have been on the program yearly ever since. It further occurred to me that many Guild members missed at least some of those Bashes and thus did not get to "enjoy" these satirical efforts.

In the interest of fairness -- of spreading the wealth, as it were ... or spreading the pain -- I have decided to print the lyrics here to one of my annual numbers. I don't have a 900 phone number set up to gauge your reaction, but if there IS any interest, I may come back for an encore in a future Newsletter.

This particular parody is set to the stirring strains of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." I sang it at the 1991 Bash in Chicago as my personal tribute to the American Numismatic Association on the occasion of its centennial. (As I noted in introducing it, something truly heroic seemed in order.)

Incidentally, that Bash was the last one Walter Breen ever attended; his legal and medical problems hadn't yet overtaken him. I mention this in anticipation that some may find the reference to Walter offensive or in questionable taste. I would simply point out that Walter himself roared with laughter at the time.

Here, then, is my tribute to our favorite national coin club:



Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of John Ford.
They have gazed at John Jay Pittman when free drinks were being poured.
They have glimpsed the fearsome box where Walter Breen's old clothes are stored.
His shorts go marching on!

Glory, glory, numismatics! Hail to all the coins in attics!
We are ANA fanatics In this, its hundredth year.

In the early 1900s, Farran Zerbe walked the land,
But the coin collecting hobby wasn't easy to expand.
All the coins with any value then belonged to Virgil Brand
Till he went marching out.

ANA met in the lobby when we had a smaller hobby.
Everything was nice and snobby -Just like the ANS. Then the Blue Book and the Red Book
and the ads of B. Max Mehl brought the public to our doorstep, looking for the Holy Grail-
Which was fine until some dealers started grading coins in Braille.
Then truth went marching out.

Glory, glory, Grey and Bluesheet. Maybe now we need a new sheet.
How about an IOU sheet For those whose ink is red?

When the founding fathers gathered back in 1891,
They could hardly have imagined what it was they had begun.
If they saw us here tonight, they'd say, "My God, what have we done?
"Is THIS our hundredth year?"

News of our Friends

Virginia M. "Ginger" Bryan of Gainesville, FLa., wife of NLG member Roger Bryan, died Aug. 23 at the age of 56. Like her husband, she was a staunch supporter of the Guild and a mainstay of the Florida United Numismatists.

Grover C. Criswell Jr., a longtime member of the Guild, received the Medal of Merit from the American Numismatic Association during the ANA's Early Spring Convention in New Orleans. Grover is a past president of the ANA and served for many years on the ANA Board of Governors. While congratulating Grover on this well-deserved honor, the Guild also extends condolences on the recent death of his son, Grover III.

N. Neil Harris, who was active in the Guild for a number of years, recently joined Medallic Art Co. of Sioux Falls, S.D., as art director. Neil served for more than a decade as editor of the Numismatist.

Alan Herbert, one of the Guild's most senior and most active members, tied the knot March 6 with Josephine F. Davis of Mesa, Ariz., at the East Mesa Christian Church. Chester L. Krause served as best man. Alan has been writing for Krause Publications for many years, most notably as an authority on mint-error coins, and currently is editor of Coins Magazine.

Paul Vincze, a sculptor of enormous talent and a friend of the NLG for many years, died March 5 in France at the age of 86. He is survived by his wife, Betty. Over the years, the Vinczes frequently attended ANA conventions and, while there, enjoyed being with us at our Bashes.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ISAAC NEWTON REVISITED

Your November 1993 issue contained a brief biography of Isaac Newton, physicist and former Master of the Royal Mint. As with many brief biographical outlines, the last couple of paragraphs summarise facts of the man's professional life but, in their brevity, are unable to convey much of the person. Genius Newton may have been, but he was very human.

At Cambridge Newton proved arrogant, shy and sulky, self-absorbed in his studies, slow to publish his results or share them with others, and jealous of any competition. He needed to be handled with tact and deference. When Edmund Halley fronted up, searching for help in calculating the orbits of comets, Newton informed him he had solved the problem of universal gravity but had mislaid the calculations. It was Halley who finally managed to persuade him to set his ideas in order and explain the motions of the planets. It was Halley who nagged him into completing this work, and it was Halley who, although he couldn't afford it, paid for publication of the Principia in 1687. Newton was not hard up but made no contribution to the expenses of one of the grandest books of science.

Having set the planets in their orbits Newton was able to focus his full attention on his alchemy and by 1692 had become literally mad as a hatter. He had slowly become poisoned by the mercury, arsenic and antimony that played a major role in his experiments; his rooms at Trinity resembled a mini-Minamata. Depression, paranoia, insomnia and forgetfulness became his lot. His hands shook incessantly. With his brain shot, his scientific work was hopelessly impaired and he was deemed fit for public office. It was now that he was elected Member of Parliament and appointed Master of the Mint.

Halley went on to perfect the taste for brandy he had acquired during his brief naval career. The two remained friends until just before Newton's death in 1727 by which time Newton had become President of the Royal Society and Halley Astronomer Royal. It was now Halley's turn to refuse to publish; in this case observations of the Moon that Newton felt were rightly public property. The dispute became bitter and was unresolved at Newton's death. Halley lived until 1742, dying immediately after having a last swig of alcohol.

Sincerely,

Professor Kerry Rodgers
Department of Geology
University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland, NEW ZEALAND

LETTERS...BOY, DID HE GET LETTERS!

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Twenty-six years ago, Lee Martin was the driving force behind the formation of the NLG. For many years, he also served as advertising director of COINage Magazine -- and in that capacity, he got his share of oddball correspondence. This article, featuring excerpts from some of those letters, first appeared in the NLG Newsletter a dozen years ago, but many current members probably never read it, and we suspect that even old-timers will enjoy rereading it.)

By Lee Martin

***

To Whom It May Concern: I was given an old $10 bill and was told it was a collectors item.

***

Dear Sir: I am interested in coins. Please send me information.

***

Dear Sir: Please send me 1973 and 1974.

***

Dear Sir: I'm writting you this letter for I am hold respondsable for me losting $18. How come because? If I not saw your add you put in your mag. I would not have wrote a crook. He would not have crooked me for $18...

***

To Whom It May Concern: I have a very old large one dollar bill. How much is it worth? Its got a lot of tears but it's still together.

***

Dear Sir: I am a big coin collector. I have a few of your mags. Please send me some information on coins. What was the first put out? Would you told me.

Dear Mr. Martin: Just a note to tell you the pleasure and knowledge I got from this months Rock & Gem. Keep up the good work. Please send a free subscription. *(AUTHOR'S NOTE: Rock & Gem is one of COINage's sister publications.)*

* * *

Dear Sir: 1 would like for you to give all the information possible on a plain counterfeit 1883 silver dollar. Will you buy it?

* * *

Hey... I saw that a Kennedy half-dollar cover was worth $18,000. 1 have some like it. *(AUTHOR'S NOTE: The cover was the first Kennedy half dollar PNC sent by the 99 Company, which initiated the PNC hobby.)*

* * *

MARGOLIS SECOND EDITION

Arnold Margolis, author of the prize winning Error Coin Encyclopedia (Best Coin Book of 1991, NLG) announces the publication of a second edition, "Error Coin Encyclopedia II."

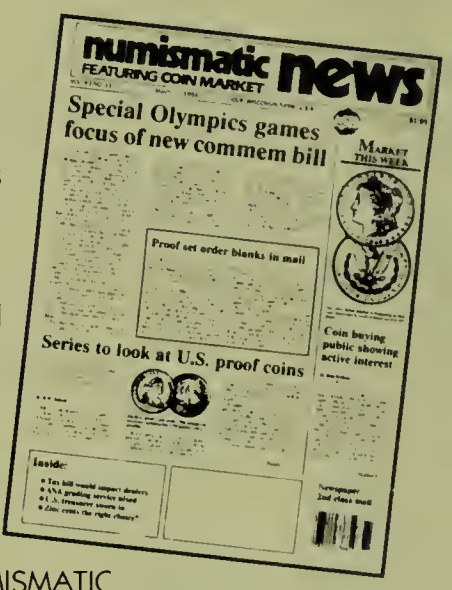
The hard-cover edition will cost $36.95 while a soft-cover version will list for $24.95, postpaid.

Please send all orders to Arnold Margolis, PO Box 158, Oceanside, NY 11572-0158. Autographed copies will be furnished upon request.

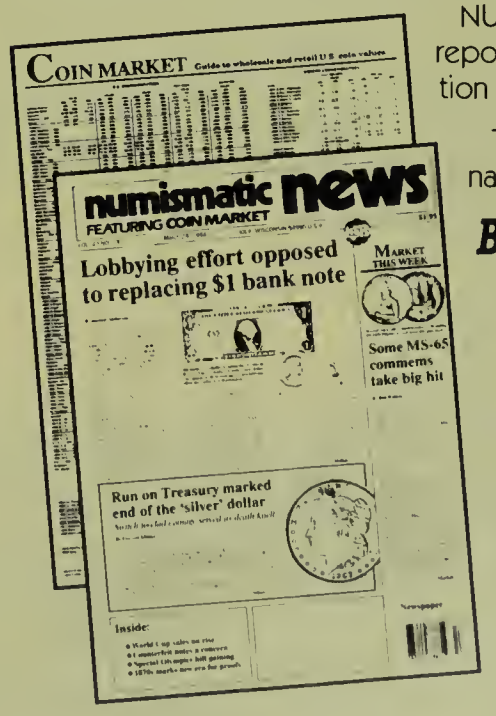
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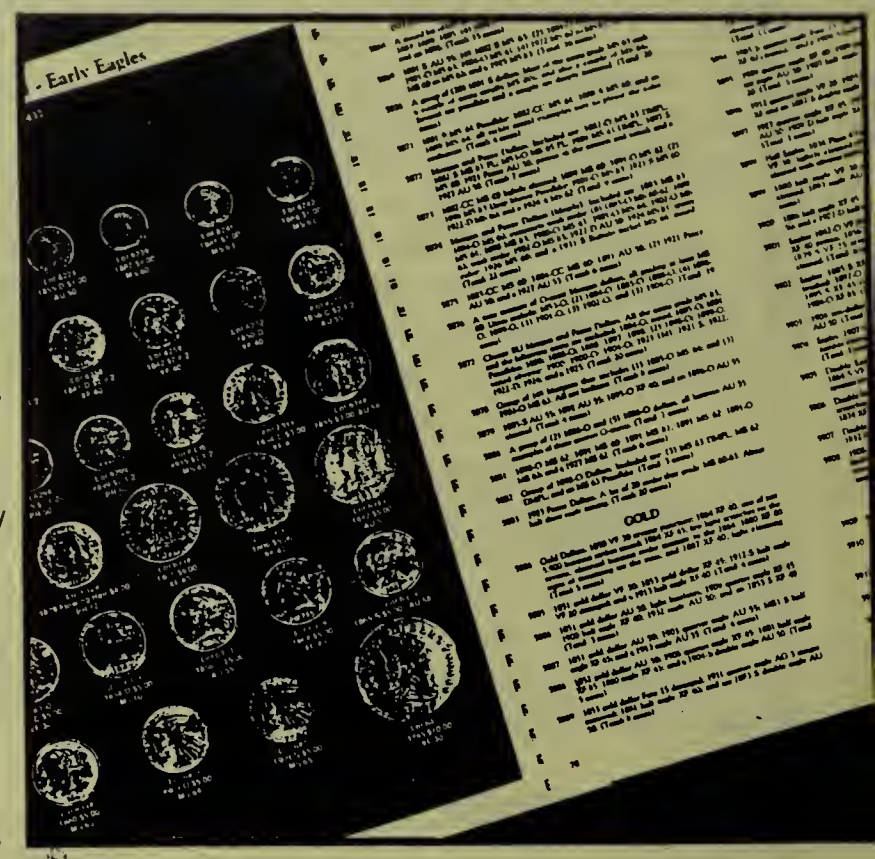


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